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ABSTRACT

This document represents the only issue of UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen's newsletter published in 2001. The report describes research findings concerning children and media violence, children's media use, and activities aimed at limiting gratuitous media violence. One article summarizes three workshops held at a European Commission Expert Seminar dealing with protecting minors from harmful content on the Internet and in video and computer games, protecting minors from harmful content in the television environment, and creating a "fair play" situation in television advertising directed at children. Future conferences dealing with children and media violence and global campaigns promoting children's rights are also described. A third article describes media literacy and participation programs in Argentina, Canada, Japan, and Spain. The report also reviews an anthology intended to provide a stimulus for adolescent discussion related to the construction of gender in television, advertising, and film. Recent findings on the depiction of rape in American television series are also presented. The report concludes with a list of relevant coming events. (KB)

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ED 464 730

News from

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

1 2001

Contents

EU Expert Seminar 3

Forums, Summit, Movements 8

Media Literacy and Children's Participation 11

Media Violence 15

Coming Events 18

PS 030343

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We welcome...

researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals to the Clearinghouse information network. As a participant you will receive our publications (in English) with the contributions of other network participants from all parts of the globe. (Participation is free of charge.)

***The value of the Clearinghouse as a forum** rests in the breadth of its coverage and the commitment of its participants. In short: the more relevant information we gather, and the more who contribute from all continents, the better our services.*

***We are interested in** research related to children, young people and media violence, children's access to media and their media use, media education, media for children, children's participation in the media, and in documentation of measures and activities of relevance to this field.*

***News briefs and short articles to our newsletter**, "News from ICCVOS", will be greatly valued, as will notices of coming and recent conferences, seminars and other events; of new publications; and of active associations and organisations with children and media in view.*

***We are also grateful for receiving relevant publications and materials** – if possible, two copies of each, please! They will be documented at the Clearinghouse into a growing knowledge base for overviews, compilations and bibliographies of interest to various groups of users.*

***As for publications and materials in other languages** than English, French, German and Spanish, we kindly ask you for complementary translations of the titles.*

***We look forward to hearing from you**, not least regarding any requests or suggestions you may have concerning Clearinghouse services. And we hope that you will appreciate our efforts – as a means of making your own work known in wider circles, and as a way to keep abreast of others' work.*

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EU Expert Seminar: Children and Young People in the New Media Landscape

The Swedish Presidency of the European Union, in co-operation with the European Commission, organised an expert seminar in Stockholm on 12-13 February 2001, entitled "Children and Young People in the New Media Landscape".

The seminar brought together more than 200 representatives from governments and authorities within the Member States and Candidate countries, EU institutions, media industries and non-governmental organisations.

The theme of the seminar was the situation of minors in the media, seen in the light of the rapidly evolving media landscape due to the impact of globalisation, digitalisation, the emergence of new media and the growth of media output. The issues discussed were protection of minors from harmful content on the Internet, in computer and video games and on television, and also television advertising directed at children.

The seminar focused on the questions on what children should be protected from and why, how the protection should be accomplished and who is to be responsible for achieving the protection.

The Swedish Minister of Culture, Mrs Marita Ulvskog, opened the seminar and expressed her gratitude to all participants coming to the seminar to take part in the discussions. She underlined the importance of the theme and that the seminar had an important task in taking the discussions on methods and responsibilities into practice.

As an introduction to the discussions two school classes of 11-year-olds presented their views on the mass media in society and in their own lives by performing a self-made production composed of song, music, dances and sketches.

As a contribution to the following workshops, Cecilia von Feilitzen, PhD, made an outline of research findings on children and media in the new media landscape.

At the end of the seminar representatives of European public service broadcasters, supplemented by representatives of private television, underlined how quality programming could play an important role for the healthy development and well being of children.

The European Commission gave in its concluding speech some orientations concerning their further work on the question of protection of minors from harmful content in the media and also on the question of advertising directed at children.

The text above and the following ones summarising the discussions of the three workshops at the seminar are excerpts from the "Presidency Report and Conclusions".[1] □

Note
1. The full document and other material from the seminar are available on the Presidency web site http://www.eu2001.se/calendar
Please type date of the event, 12/02/2001, and tick the box "Other meetings"

Workshop 1: Protection of Minors from Harmful Content – on the Internet and in Video and Computer Games

In the Internet, video and computer games workshop there was a general consensus that children, regardless of age, need protection from harmful content.

The group agreed that the discussion of protection this day applied to the age group ten to fifteen year olds.

Many speakers noted that different cultural aspects and values come into play when discussing these issues. Bad language, nudity, violence and sex were mentioned as areas where protection is necessary. Moreover, there appears to exist a different basis of values in Europe compared to the US but even within Europe it is difficult to establish a common platform of values.

The European Commission representative informed about the outcome so far of the evaluation of the Recommendation on the protection of minors and human dignity.[1] The Commission is co-funding several European initiatives such as projects aiming at giving parents technical tools of protection and to awareness raising actions. Filter-

Note
1. The evaluation report was published on February 27, 2001 - see under the heading "Protection of Minors: Same Rules for All Media?", p. 7

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ing techniques as such is a controversial matter but all agree that awareness-raising projects are desirable.

Around fifty awareness-raising projects are under way also involving Norway and Iceland. Twelve member states have implemented codes of conduct. Several of these codes have been drawn up by Internet service providers but they do not concern matters of content, but rather matters of services. The Commission representative stressed the importance that all parties involved should take part in this process, the Internet industry as well as national authorities and users.

Several methods of protection were presented such as technical devices, awareness raising methods, media education. The importance of self-regulation was stressed which also comprises the importance of codes of conduct set up by the industry.

So-called walled gardens where children safely can interact was mentioned but no secure solution has yet been developed.

Another method presented was awareness raising actions, implying actions designed at creating a higher level of awareness of what risks and dangers a child can be subjected to when using the Internet. Awareness raising actions are aimed at children, parents, and others from the adult society and include measures of how to deal with those risks.

An additional means of protection mentioned was white and black lists. These lists display sites that a certain portal or other content provider would offer access to or respectively, block the access to.

However, this day focus remained on rating and filtering techniques, their possibilities and limitations. Several speakers stressed the difficulties in defining neutral descriptive systems for rating Internet content. An ongoing process of refining these classification tools will give parents and other adults even better choices.

A need for third party raters was also expressed. Corresponding to the consumer's own values and cultural preferences a broad range of sites compiled by a sort of librarians could be offered as a free or commercial service.

Moderated chat rooms was presented as a means of protection of minors using chat rooms. A moderated chat differs from a conventional chat in the sense that a physical person supervises and decides whether or not to accept the statements coming in to the chat.

Concerning content restricting methods certain apprehensions were raised about limiting the right of free speech. The consumer representative raised worries about disregarding the rights of the child in favour of the right of free speech.

There is not only a need for better tools of protection, speakers said, parents also need to get a better understanding of and information about what tools of protection there actually are today.

Several speakers stressed the importance of greater user-friendliness. An increased interaction between technicians, consumers and Internet Service Providers was sought for. Full transparency was desired in regard of intended technical schemes.

Consumer choice and empowering the consumer can, according to the consumer organization representative, only grow if more Internet sites are rated. By increasing the number of rated sites, consumers can choose what sites to go to, and also what rating systems to use.

Concerning computer and video games, the self-regulatory age rating system adapted by parts of the European computer and video game industry was presented as well as a wish for a common European level of rating.

The question of who is to be responsible for the protection of minors was also raised. The roles of parents, schools, the government and national authorities, Internet service providers and Internet content providers were highlighted. Due to the complex media situation a precise balance between these actors was difficult to define.

One speaker mentioned the present switch in shouldering responsibilities. In a traditional media environment national authorities carry a responsibility of protection, which to a certain extent no longer is efficient. The media landscape of today is more complex and media use is becoming more individualised and consequently the role of the parents and the government needs to be re-defined.

Looking into the future the panel agreed that the Internet is a rapidly evolving phenomenon that will become more mature. While traditional media industries will move in, alternative societies will remain which means that anarchistic subcultures will co-exist with an established Internet. □

Thank you!

Many readers kindly answered to our request for a Project and Publication Update. The information received about your work is most valuable for our data base and will be spread to a wider audience through inquiries continuously made to the Clearinghouse, or through our newsletter and other publications. Once again, thank you and please continue to keep us abreast of your work!

Workshop 2:
Protection of Minors from Harmful Content – in a Digital and Global Television Environment

The workshop started by highlighting the many benefits of television giving us news, information, entertainment, suspense and keeping us informed about what life can be outside of our own lives.

The issue of what to protect children from was answered by several participants as violence, sexual acts, discrimination, use of drugs and alcohol, rude language and commercial exploitation.

But variations were expressed in the priority of these topics and it was considered important to respect the cultural differences. A further European dialogue in order to reach a consensus was asked for but as a long-term process. One example in the field of film classification was referred to where a dialogue lasting for ten years had resulted in a useful mutual understanding between three European countries.

The need to protect children was mentioned as an ethical issue rather than an issue of evidence of influence. During the discussion on classification of content there was a clear distinction between a value neutral descriptive classification like "nudity" or "violence" and an evaluative classification like "harmful" or the use of age recommendations. It was considered easier to reach consensus on neutral content descriptions than on age recommendations, which would differ from one country to another. There were critical remarks in the discussions about how neutral a neutral classification can be, for example when it comes to violence in the news.

Many speakers underlined the fact that restrictions are not the only way and that controlling content is not necessarily the best means of protection. Instead of protection children also need to be prepared. Several times emphasis was put on quality programming for children, addressing dignity and respect for the needs of children.

A frequently used word was "empowerment". Almost all of the speakers mentioned media education as an important and positive means of empowering children, and that media education should be part of the regular school system. Media education was stressed as equally important for parents, broadcasters and producers of children's programmes. It was mentioned that starting school means awareness of reading and writing, but at that stage children have already been media consumers for many years with no education at all. The workshop was informed that in some countries there were educational projects on a preschool level.

There was a widespread belief that the full benefit of convergence and digitalisation is mainly a question of the future and that we must not forget that non-interactive analogue television is still the reality for most European households. People's media habits do not change as rapidly as technology. Thus, conventional methods like watersheds are still valid.

There was a presentation of the Oxford study on parental control[1] showing the triangle of 1) meta-information, giving value neutral information to parents, 2) technical devices to filter the meta-information, to be used on a voluntary basis by the consumer 3) media education. It was stressed that in the new digital age parents will be an important part of the protection. According to recent studies parents want to be in charge of the protection of their children but they need tools, which are mainly lacking today. On the question of how a system would work for children with parents who do not care about this, the answer was that every system would fail if parents do not care. There was clear consensus that the growing responsibility and possibilities of parents should not by any means decrease the responsibility of broadcasters.

The Commission gave a brief report on the evaluation of the Recommendation on the protection of minors and human dignity (98/560/EC).[2] The national reports show encouraging results but also very heterogeneous approaches to self-regulation. Very little has so far been done regarding computer games, while hotlines for the Internet are established in several countries. Industry activities include the rating and filtering system of ICRA, the work of European Internet Service Providers and of the Digital Video Broadcasting Consortium. The Commission also reported on the Internet Action Plan.

The forthcoming revision of the directive "Television without frontiers" will include public consultations and may well be influenced by the evaluation report of the Recommendation in respect of all electronic content. The revision will include three studies: on advertising techniques, on technical devices and on promotion of European content. One of the conclusions of the Commission is that the basic aims for audiovisual policy will remain the same, but the means may change. In that respect the Commission mentioned that the fundamental principle of proportionality is valid also for the protection of minors.

There was a presentation of the new Netherlands Institute for Classification of Audiovisual Media, NICAM, starting a self-regulation system

Notes

1. This study, performed earlier by the University of Oxford, PCMLP, on behalf of the European Commission is available on http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/legis/key_doc/parental_control/index_en.htm
2. The evaluation report was published on February 27, 2001 – see under the heading "Protection of Minors: Same Rules for All Media?", p. 7

for film, video, television and videogames this month. The aim is to deliver media neutral information to consumers in the form of age recommendations. The classification will be done by hundreds of classifiers working separately according to a specific system of rules. To join the system is voluntary and in two years the experiment of NICAM will be evaluated by the state.

The white paper on the Office of Communications, OFCOM, in the UK was briefly presented.

Some doubts on the effect of self-regulation were expressed and the need for evaluations, accountability, transparency and sanctions in a self-regulatory system was stressed. When it comes to sanctions the Commission declared that the TV directive is still valid. □

Workshop 3: Television Advertising Directed at Children. How Do We Create a "Fair Play" Situation?

Workshop 3 discussed television advertising directed at children and how to create a "fair play" situation between industry, advertisers and TV companies on the one hand, and children on the other. This report summarizes in broad outline the most essential issues and arguments in the very intense, informative and multi-faceted discussion.

Two rather clean-cut approaches to the issue could be found in the discussion. On the one side there were those defending the right to direct advertising at children in television. At the same time there were those questioning the ethics in targeting advertising in television at small children, a group which was in favour of stricter rules.

The main arguments provided by those in favour of television advertising directed at children were as follows:

- Self-regulation is effective. The industry is taking sufficient responsibility for children in advertising through the current self-regulation and the existing codes of conduct.
- The broadcasters are depending on the income from children's advertising in order to produce programmes for children. Without this advertising there wouldn't be any quality programmes for children.
- Children are not naive and gullible. Advertising is a part of life and children have to learn to deal with it. They cannot be kept "cocooned" from the outside world – commercial messages being a part of this.
- Advertising is good for children. It gives them advantages and brings them information and education on how the world operates.
- The consequences of a ban on television advertising aimed at children would be less choice, less innovation and higher prices.
- Television advertising directed at children is contributing to create conditions for a free and independent broadcasting industry.

The main arguments provided by those opposing television advertising directed at children were as follows:

- Children cannot distinguish adverts from editorial programmes, and they have not developed the ability to understand the purpose of advertising.
- Children are not critical. They cannot be and they should not be. Childhood is the period in life where you have to take in all impressions, and believe everything you see and hear in order to learn and grow. This indispensable credulity should not be exploited.
- Self-regulation has showed to be an insufficient means to protect children from television advertising and more restrictive legislation is therefore needed.
- The commercial pressure on children has increased over the years. There is a need for a reduction of this pressure and for the establishment of areas for children which are free from advertisements.
- There is no obvious link between children's advertising and production of quality children's programmes. The first is not a guarantee for the latter.
- Children have a right to quality programmes. Advertising directed at children cannot be laid down as a condition for bringing this about. This is a matter of political will.

During the debate different research studies where presented in order to support a certain statement. It was stated, however, that many studies seem to

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support the view of the institutions funding the research. The need for more impartial and scientific research was emphasized.

The Commission informed the workshop of the study on advertising in television that was launched in January 2000 and that will soon be completed. It will be published on the Commissions website together with a communication.[1] The study will present a complete picture of the rules in the different Member States, in particular those rules that are further reaching than those of the Television without Frontiers Directive.

The consultant has been asked to prepare the study with reference to the following key issues:

- The underlying principles that apply to national legislation on television advertising and teleshopping
- Whether there are any differences in treatment between different media (for example between free-to-air and pay TV, or between television and the press)
- The age limits that apply in respect of television, and whether differences exist between television and other media
- The existence and handling of any complaints and the systems that exist for their resolution

The study will amongst other reports, of which one is dealing with new interactive forms of advertising, serve as a basis for the forthcoming review of the "Television without Frontiers" directive in 2002.

It was also informed that the responsible Commissioner has stated, that if a ban on television advertising directed at children is to be considered at community level, very strong evidence for such a need would be required.[2]

Even though many different opinions where expressed within the workshop there was a consensus on the principle that children need to be given special attention when it comes to advertising. ■

Notes

1. The "Study on the Impact of Advertising and Teleshopping on Minors" realised by INRA/Bird&Bird for the European Commission is available on http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/whatsnew_en.htm Go to April 20
2. For more information, see below under the heading "EU Ban on Advertising Unlikely".

EU Ban on Advertising Unlikely

At present, an EU-wide ban on advertising directed at children appears most unlikely. Views on the issue vary considerably between the Member States, as was evident at the above-mentioned seminar on "Children and Young People in the New Media Landscape" in Stockholm in February 2001. Nor would it be easy to change the rules on advertising in the EU Television Directive, warned Mr Jean-Eric de Cockborne from the European Commission Education and Culture Directorate at the seminar. The burden of proof lies with those advocating further regulation, he pointed out.

To justify a ban it must be demonstrated that: a) such a measure is indispensable, b) would be proportionate to the objective to be achieved, c) would not discriminate against television as compared to other media and d) would not contradict other policy objectives, such as the funding of European children's programming, often financed by advertising.

The European Commission does not call into question the need for measures to protect children.

– But the means we use to achieve these goals may have to be adapted in the light of technological and market developments. New instruments, such as self-regulation, must be considered, where appropriate on the basis of guidelines laid down by public authorities, said Mr de Cockborne.

Also, rules on advertising should not apply to television alone but to other media as well. Judging from other Commission statements such an approach may well characterize future EU regulation more generally. In future, the present TV directive – now under review – is likely to be transformed into a wider "content" directive. The results of the Commission's study on minors and TV advertising and teleshopping is also likely to affect future regulation.[1]

by Anna Celsing, Free-lance Journalist, Belgium

Note

1. The "Study on the Impact of Advertising and Teleshopping on Minors" realised by INRA/Bird&Bird for the European Commission is available on http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/whatsnew_en.htm Go to April 20

Protection of Minors: Same Rules for All Media?

In 1998, the European Council of Ministers adopted a Recommendation on the protection of minors and human dignity.

– After two years the results of the application of the Recommendation are encouraging, although interested parties and in particular consumers should have been more involved in the establishment of codes of conduct, writes the European Commission in its evaluation report (see: europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/whatsnew_en.htm Go to February 27).

The report shows that the Recommendation has not been applied uniformly across the Euro-

pean Union. However, most Member States have launched campaigns for safer use of the Internet and some have introduced new legislation or supported measures such as the establishment of hotlines. Several also stress that cooperation on a European level is not sufficient, calling for global efforts and the establishment of world-wide minimum standards.

In its conclusion, the Commission argues that the protection of minors should cover all media, be it Internet, broadcasting, videogames or supports like video cassettes and DVDs.

– Renewed efforts need to be made to ensure a coherent approach, in particular as convergence will continue to increase.

The Commission seems to be a firm believer in industry self-regulation, sometimes in the form of "co-regulation" with the state. As good examples of such an approach it points to the recent British Communications White Paper, and the establishment of the Dutch Institute for Classification of Audiovisual Media (NICAM) which will provide a uniform system of classification for all audiovisual media and descriptive consumer information about computer games, films, TV programmes, etc.[1]

– Such approaches may constitute an orientation for further implementation of the Recommendation, hints the European Commission.

by Anna Celsing, Free-lance Journalist, Belgium

Note

1. For more details about NICAM, see the article written by Peter Nikken in *News from ICCVOS*, No. 2, 2000, p. 20.

Forums, Summit, Movements

Innocence in Danger: Citizens to Protect Children On-line

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The World Citizen's Movement to Protect Innocence in Danger has now become an independent non-governmental organisation under the presidency of Mme Homayra Sellier; its statutes are formalised according to the French law of 1901. This status has propelled the movement to take its place alongside other national and international partners working to protect children from sexual abuse, particularly through the 'traps' and misuse of the Internet.

The White March in Paris on 2 March 2001 provided a major event to put this synergy to work. *Innocence in Danger* joined fifty other child protection groups from Belgium, England, France, Italy and Switzerland walking in silence through the city to the French Ministry of Justice.

Speaking on behalf of *Innocence in Danger*, Virginie de la Croix highlighted the key points at issue: "We demand that the testimony of children be taken into account, and that these words be given juridical significance, otherwise children's testimony is effectively censored; we demand that judges and magistrates be trained to listen to children and accept their testimony; we demand that child psychologists and psychiatrists assist at the juridical testimony of children to interpret their silence, their unspoken words; we demand a more speedy return of justice for the children."

Just prior to this, *Innocence in Danger* participated in the Internet celebration of Chambéry. Homayra Sellier, Choy Arnaldo, Christine Leroy and Vivian Medina met with parents and teachers to discuss the undesirable content and snares in the chat rooms children may come across on the Internet. The *Innocence in Danger* team also taught children how to find and use educational and creative sites.

Last winter, *Innocence in Danger* was also involved in other activities to draw attention to the movement and the importance of protecting children's rights. Among these is a poster campaign in the Paris metro stations, as well as the organising and hosting of a charity concert.

The Movement's website is now operational, in English and French, on
http://www.InnocenceInDanger.com or
http://www.InnocenceEnDanger.com □

Second International Forum for Child and Media Research

The Second International Forum of Children and Media Researchers, "Young People and the Media – Tomorrow. Issues and Outlook", took place in November 26-29, 2000, Sydney, Australia. It was hosted by the Australian National Commission for UNESCO with organisational support from the Australian Broadcasting Authority. The event was chaired by Gareth Grainger and had been planned in consultation with the international scientific committee established at the first international research forum in Paris, 1997. This Second Forum promoted discussions on a diversity of research and policy issues in all areas of the media, including television, print, radio and the Internet. It also provided an occasion for dialogue and interaction between members of the research community and representatives of research user groups, such as regulators, producers and educators.

The Forum was attended by some 300 participants. Papers and posters focused on the main themes given in advance: youth production and consumption of media; globalisation and socialisation; policy and regulation of media for young people; and, interwoven with the these themes, approaches to research methodologies.

The abstracts and/or papers of the speeches are available on the web site of the Forum: http://www.sydneyforum.com

A parallel Asia-Pacific Youth and the Media Conference included an exhibition of media production by young people as well as presentations and discussion on media-related issues.

Discussions have begun on how to realise a third research Forum.

Asia-Pacific Television Forum on Children and Youth

At the Asia-Pacific Television Forum on Children and Youth in Seoul, South Korea, 4-7 February 2001, over 120 high-level television professionals gathered to discuss the media's critical role in promoting and protecting the rights of children. Representatives of public and private companies, satellite and cable networks, and regional television associations presented and discussed innovative programming ideas and advocacy campaigns. The emphasis was on producing high-quality television programmes for children, ensuring that children's concerns are given the attention they deserve, and making sure that children's "voices" are heard on television. The Forum was the first follow-up meeting in the region to the Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media held in Manila in 1996.

An official declaration was adopted at the Forum and an action blueprint developed. The Declaration was presented to the 3rd World Summit on Media for Children in Greece in March, 2001, and was shared with governments at the Fifth Ministerial Consultation in Beijing in May, 2001. The action points are practical ideas for TV news and children's programmes recommended as starting points to better serve the interests of children in local and national television markets. The Declaration as well as the action blueprint can be found on the UNICEF web site, see address below. Forum participants also pledged to support the coming UN Special Session on Children with widespread coverage of its aims and goals.

Source

http://www.unicef.org/broadcast/tvforum/index.html

3rd World Summit on Media for Children

The 3rd World Summit on Media for Children took off during 23-26 March 2001 in Thessaloniki, Greece. It was chaired by Athina Rikaki and produced by the European Children's Television Centre (E.C.T.C.) under the auspices of the President of the Hellenic Republic, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, UNESCO and UNICEF. Many institutions supported the Summit, which was supervised by the Hellenic Audiovisual Institute (I.O.M.) and organised by Children's Media Development (CMD).

The Summit aimed at enhancing media quality and media awareness world-wide and at demonstrating the emerging relation between television, radio and the new media. The ca. 850 participants from some 80 countries were above all media professionals from the public and private spheres, but also many researchers, media educators, politicians, voluntary organisations – as well as children themselves.

After the opening including Greek shadow theatre, songs, music and dance by and for children, an award ceremony for best children's videos in the Kids for Kids Festival, and much more, the work of the Summit began. There were four main themes with plenary sessions and workshops: "Going Global," treating positive and negative aspects of globalisation, especially considering children's media situation; "Media for All," exploring the needs, initiatives and ideas guaranteeing every child's right to quality media; "New Technologies," presenting the latest developments as well as ways of empowering children through the new media; and "Children Have a Say," where scholars shared their knowledge of topical media research and media literacy, and discussed the latest policy trends supporting children's rights.

The Summit also comprised, i.a., a technology playground, virtual world sessions where children not at the Summit participated, children's events, sessions on cinema and on animation, screenings, and an exhibition hall with booths where profes-

sionals presented their work.

It is impossible at this stage to give even a brief summary of the most relevant ideas and achievements of all these parallel events, apart from the fact that there are also long-term effects of such huge meetings. Bulletins with a few highlights of the four days are published on the web site of the Summit: http://www.3rd-ws.org and the minutes are planned to be released in October 2001.

Meanwhile, all interested persons are invited during the next few months to give their viewpoints on the "Draft Declaration of Thessaloniki: Commitment for the Future" as regards children and media, put forward by I.O.M. during the final session. This declaration is also placed on the web site (see the address above, tick the Bulletin of the fourth day).

To wind up the Summit, the 4th World Summit on Media for Children was announced to take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2004.

The Oslo Challenge Follow-up

Ensure that the power of the media for good in the lives of children is identified, encouraged and supported, while the potential harmful effects are recognized and reduced...
– this is the Oslo Challenge.

Launched by the Norwegian Government and UNICEF on the tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in November 1999, the Oslo Challenge calls upon governments, organizations and individuals working for children, media professionals, children and young people, the private sector, parents, teachers and researchers to play their part in developing the exiting but complex relationship between children and the media.

As one element of its response to the Oslo challenge, UNICEF, with the support of the Government of Norway, is producing a *resource pack of good ideas* that have been tried and tested by media industry players, organizations working for and with children, governments and academic/educational institutions. The aim of this pack is to encourage and support new initiatives that will contribute to developing the relationship between children and the media.

Along with the resource pack, the *Oslo Challenge e-mail network* will be expanded and energized so that ideas and information can be shared and more players can be brought into the Oslo Challenge follow-up.

If you would like to join the e-mail network, send a message to the address below and include the words "OC e-mail sign-up" in the subject line. If you wish to contribute to the resource pack, please, send a brief description of your/your organization's project/s together with all necessary contact details to the same adress.

For more details, including the full text of the Oslo Challenge and a more complete description of its follow-up, please contact:

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Global Movement for Children – Say Yes for Children

On April 26, 2001, UNICEF and others launched the global campaign "Say Yes for Children", headed by an array of international personalities including, e.g., Nelson Mandela, Graça Machel, Kofi Annan and Bill Gates. The campaign will rally people behind ten overarching principles, building on the Convention on the Rights of the Child: Leave No Child Out; Put Children First; Care for Every Child; Fight HIV/AIDS; Stop Harming and Exploiting Children; Listen to Children; Educate Every Child; Protect Children from War; Protect the Earth for Children; Fight Poverty – Invest in Children.

The principles were developed by the Global Movement for Children (GMC), a broad-based coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to children's rights and well-being. The first major initiative of the GMC, "Say Yes", will tally pledges throughout the spring and summer, presenting the results to heads of state and governments at the Special Session on Children, scheduled at the UN General Assembly from September 19-21. The principles are part of the Special Session's draft outcome document – a critical plan of action for children over the next decade.

Further information and the "Say Yes" form – that gives everyone the opportunity to support the principles and send this message to the world's leaders – are found at: http://www.gmfc.org

Media Literacy and Children's Participation

"The Cinema Shows Me the Forest and the Sea"

by
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Seventy-five per cent of the poorest children aged 13 and 14 and living in the south of Buenos Aires city, Argentina, have never been to the cinema. Twenty per cent of the 550 young people surveyed have been only once. These teenagers, who live ten or fifteen minutes from downtown Buenos Aires, do not know what a cinema is.

These were the main findings of a survey conducted by the city's Department of Education before it initiated the program "School Goes to the Cinema", starting April 5, 2001. The project will allow 3,500 8th and 9th graders in Buenos Aires to go to the cinema three times a year during school hours and see three recent Argentine films for free. The program is the result of an agreement between the city government, the National Film Institute and a private cinema corporation. After the films, the children will have the chance to talk personally with the film director, producer, scriptwriter, actors, etc. Each language and literature teacher will receive a special book with suggestions on how to continue the film analysis in the classroom.

Great Expectations

Their lack of personal experience of the cinema might be the reason why so many young people expressed high expectations of a film.

The students' answers to the question *What do you think a film is for?* reflected their representations of life. The cinema plays a compensatory role in an environment of limitations, restrictions and deficits. Or, in the children's words: *The cinema shows me new places like the forest or the sea...; The film can help me with my life; The cinema teaches new experiences that can happen in the real world; The film helps me to be someone in life.* These children from families of low socioeconomic status seem to value the cinema in terms of its educational role – they want to learn, to know, to understand, to discover, to be someone...

When the streets are too dangerous for the children to walk, when they mostly stay at home to look after their brothers and sisters, the cinema is seen as a bridge allowing them to go outside their houses and discover a new world, to which they only have access through the big screen. The need (and wish) for *getting out* (of their houses and *their problems*) was a frequent answer among the students: *The cinema allows me to get out of my house; It is good because it makes me laugh when I am sad; The cinema is good for forgetting my problems; I would like the cinema, to get out and believe I have no conflicts.* Thus, these young people expect the cinema to help them "get out", forget, overcome... This is probably why one of them said: *I would like the cinema, to see reality in a different way from the way I see it now...*

Many answers reflected dreams about "seeing a movie on a big screen": *The cinema allows me to watch a film on a huge screen; Cinema is being able to sit in a nice chair; It will allow me to see a film in a big dark room for the first time in my life; I would see a movie without advertisements; I would watch in silence; I would listen to better sound.*

In the survey there were also children who, like any other middle class adolescent, referred to the cinema as entertainment. But these young people were few; only 25 per cent talked about *good time, laugh* and *enjoyment.* Such wishes still seem to be an illusion for most of these poor students.

On the 5th of April, in a very dark room and in front of a big screen, 3,500 children from the south of Buenos Aires will see their illusions come through.

Epilogue

Shortly after the start of the cinema program – which was a great success – another huge project, "School Makes TV", was launched. This festival, the first of its kind, offers all 6th and 7th graders (11- and 12-year-olds) in Buenos Aires the possibility of writing a fictive story. The winning story will be made into a professionally produced TV program and broadcast simultaneously on all four private and public national TV channels in the city. □

Media Education and At-risk Adolescents in Canada

by
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The Alternative Career Education (ACE) Program assists at-risk students, who struggle with conventional educational approaches, to acquire some sense of success and consequently want to stay in school. I have, in Canada, developed the ACE Program from a traditional teacher directed program to a student-centered, multi-media/technology learning environment. ACE curriculum includes learning about the mass media and the technologies associated with it, reading/analyzing and studying popular culture texts, having students write/produce their own media texts, and making connections between the English Language Arts and Media Education. By media texts, I am referring to print texts, such as newspapers, magazines, advertisements, as well as non-print texts, such as videos, television and radio commercials.

The ACE Students

The ACE students vary in age from sixteen to nineteen years. Most are English speaking mother tongue, many are French, bilingual. They are physically and socially indistinguishable from typical high school students. They aspire to be successful academically and vocationally, and most are actually quite capable learners.

Contrary to many of the stereotypical images associated with at-risk students, ACE students want to succeed, learn, do not want to drop out of school, are naturally curious, can collaborate, are adaptable to new situations, capable of higher level thinking.

Many ACE students' reading levels are between grade five and seven, placing them well below grade nine, the norm for students aged sixteen. At the extreme, there are ACE students who are reading and writing at the pre-high school level. The result of their negative experiences in school, and at home, have left many students "turned off" to schooling.

The Research Question and Methodology

For six years, I investigated what happened as the ACE students followed the Media Education Curriculum I developed with and for them.[1] I was particularly interested in learning what they knew about the media already and what they learned about it in my classes. I was also interested in seeing to what extent their understanding of media and traditional forms of language were exploited and developed by my teaching.

My primary question was: what kinds of *literate behaviours* do ACE students demonstrate following the media education curriculum I developed?

The methodology for my inquiry was a single case, classroom based action research design, focusing on the ACE Program and the ACE students, from 1991 to 1997. My inquiry was more than descriptive. It was also interpretive in nature, so that I analysed, interpreted and theorised about the specific instances in my inquiry. The procedures were suitable to the nature of the ACE Program and students, the current and developing theoretical concepts associated with Media Literacy and English Language Arts.

The Findings

The results of my inquiry demonstrated that the ACE students:

- read media texts with considerable sophistication. They were not only able to read/analyse the literal denotative aspects of texts, but were also able to interpret the connotative level;
- were able to identify ideologies in a text and relate them to their own experiences;
- acquired and used specific aspects of media languages and concepts in their writings and productions;
- were more willing to undertake the kind of school writing they are expected to do, using media texts as a source for their writing;
- demonstrated a critical, reflective stance, revealing insights about themselves as individuals and learners.

The ACE Students' Struggle for Literacy

Having observed the ACE students for several years, I have come to the conclusion that they are literate, and that traditional practices of literacy education have prevented us from acknowledging their literacy. I also now believe that schooling's notion of literacy which used de-contextualized print texts as the only data source to determine the ACE students' literacy reflects a model of literacy that is outdated and inadequate. This notion of literacy has had disastrous consequences for the kinds of students who are 'at-risk'.

While my inquiry is specific to the ACE students, it has demonstrated that students deemed at-risk, possess a form of literacy, or literate behaviour, which most Language Arts teachers, and teachers in general, have not seen to identify and thus have not exploited. Unless we, in education, begin to acknowledge that there is more to literacy 'than meets the eye', for the ACE students, and others like them, schooling will continue to result in a:

> ... *struggle for development, justice, greater equality, respect of cultures and recognition of human dignity of all and the claims of each to an economic, social and political stake in society and the fruits which derive therefrom.* (The Plan of Action to Eradicate Illiteracy by the Year 2000, UNESCO, 1989, p. 4) ■

Note
1. Lee Rother (2000) *The Impact of a Media Literacy Curriculum on the Literate Behaviour of At-risk Adolescents.* McGill University, Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, Montreal, Quebec (286 p.) (diss.)

On Media Literacy in Japan

Although well known among researchers and educators, until the mid-90s media literacy was, in principle, unknown to the Japanese Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MPT), which regulates broadcasting. At that time, Japan was considering introducing V-chip in television sets after the U.S. model. Seeing this as a regulation, the broadcasters were strongly opposed, which is why discussions on media literacy suddenly gathered speed.

Media literacy is now considered important by politicians and the media industry in Japan, although it has taken time to realise what it means. For example, one previous interpretation put forward in a report by MPT included the notion that children and young people should be "trained to understand the media contents properly" – evidently from the producer's point of view. After discussions with researchers and educators, a definition including, among other things, "reading the media critically" has become increasingly accepted.[1]

This statement was made by Professor Midori Suzuki at the international symposium "Children, Young People and Media Literacy: View on the 21st Century" on November 23, 2000, in Tokyo, Japan, organised by the Forum for Citizens' Television & Media (FCT).

The need for media literacy – hardly realised in practice in Japan – was also underlined by the Japanese panellists, following the three invited European keynote speakers. Naoki Ogi, Institute of Clinical Education "Rainbow", said that although warm relationships between children and parents constitute the foremost goal, the significance of media literacy is underlined by the fact that many Japanese children – nowadays spending most of their time indoors – watch television more than 3 hours a day and, in addition, play video games 2 hours daily. This occurs mostly without parental company, as children often have a TV set in their own room. The crime statistics also bear witness to a harsh reality: a recent phenomenon in Japan is children murdering children. Such events were 2 and 3 during the latest years, and rose to 38 during the first half of 2000. The perpetrators are not only children with difficult family and school situations, but also well-behaved children without visible problems.

Yoshihiro Yamamoto, National Institute of Educational Research, said that media literacy must be achieved by life-long education, and that training in especially audio-visual media must start for teachers. Toshiko Miyazaki, Associate Professor and Chair of the FCT, stressed that media literacy and communication through the media is the right of every citizen in a democratic society. □

by
CECILIA VON FEILITZEN
Scientific Co-ordinator
The Clearinghouse

Note
1. For a fuller account, see Midori Suzuki, Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto (2000) "Development and Directions of Media Literacy Initiatives in Japan", NIER-UIE International Seminar on Lifelong Learning in the Information Age: Transnational Study on Media Literacy in the Advent of Learning Societies, 9-11 November 2000, National Institute for Educational Research (NIER), Tokyo, Japan.

Children Make Radio in Spain

Radio Pupitre: Onda Escolar (Radio Desk: School Wave) was started on a minor scale in 1991 by the teacher Antonio Navarro Martínez and then grew in collaboration with his colleagues at an elementary school in Granja de Rocamora, Alicante, Spain. This student radio station, set up in the school, is used as a didactic tool. The teachers and pupils, aged 3 to 15, develop the objectives and contents of the broadcasts in their ordinary subjects, i.e., the broadcasts are based on daily classroom activities. When the teacher finds a finished piece of work suitable for radio, the pupils go to the studio for recording and broadcasting, taking part in the whole production process. In this way and for "real" purposes, learning often becomes more enjoyable, not least for children with problems; these children are also often responsible for handling the radio equipment.

The programmes produced by the children consist of, among other things, news read from the press, talk, writings, interviews with sportsmen, politicians, priests and professionals, jokes, poems, tales and the children's own songs. Such contents are mixed with professionally recorded music, both from the pupils' own top ten list and from other, diverse styles (classic, folk, rap, dance, house, rock, soul, boleros, etc.).

For eight years Radio Pupitre has broadcast one hour daily at 12.30; the transmissions can be heard by all people living within a ten-kilometre radius, and have attracted attention from the press. Since 1997-98, the radio studio is also used by other schools, and for courses and seminars for teachers.

For further information:
The web site of Generalitat Valenciana (in Spanish and English): http://www.cult.gva.es (tick 'Area de Educación', then 'Formación del Profesorado', then 'mes activitats d'innovació'). Samples of Pupitre broadcasts are offered, too.

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The International Children's Film Festivals Guide

is a special 3rd World Summit edition with information on 76 major children's film and television programme festivals around the world. Of these, more than 20 festivals feature films made by children, and more than half of all festivals include a children's jury. This useful guide, which has references to regulations, prizes and contact details for each festival, was compiled by CIFEJ (Centre International du Film pour l'Enfance et la Jeunesse/International Centre of Films for Children and Youth) and ECFA (European Children's Film Association).

Childhood in the Brazilian Press

The latest issue of the magazine *Infância na Mídia* (Childhood in the Media), published by ANDI (Agência de Notícias dos Direitos da Infância/ News Agency for Children's Rights) and Ayrton Senna Institute (IAS), Brazil, includes findings from a survey of the journalistic coverage of childhood in Brazil valid for the year 2000. The same year, the tenth anniversary of Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente (Statute on the Child and Adolescent, a law designed to protect all rights of children and adolescents in Brazil) fell on July 13. The survey is regularly conducted by ANDI and IAS with support from UNICEF and Fundescola – Fundo de Fortalecimento da Escola (School Empowerment Fund).

The objectives of the surveys are to analyse, and thereby improve, the press coverage of children, teenagers and issues related to them. Since the first survey, valid for 1996, the number of articles, editorials, etc., on childhood has steadily grown by about 500 per cent (from nearly 11 thousand to more than 64 thousand press inserts). Both in 1999 and 2000, education was the theme most dealt with (in 2000, 30% of all inserts in the study were about education). In 2000, the theme of violence had risen to second place (23% of all inserts in the study). Whether the press portrays violence with respect for children and their rights remains to be analysed.

ANDI and IAS award prizes to the best press coverage of childhood.

Source

Infância na Mídia, Ano 6, no1, Ediçao 10, Março 2001

Since the beginning of March 2001, ANDI also publishes brief notices in English on its web site:
http://www.andi.org.br

Philippine Children's Rights Media Toolkit

Children and adults share the media environment, which is a public space. Children and adults have diverse needs and capacities. We live together and media practitioners need to be very conscious of the fact that children are part of the public they are committed to serve. (Feny de los Angeles Bautista, PCTV)

This is the opening text in the first booklet of five in the *CRC Media Toolkit* for media producers prepared by the Philippine Children's Television Foundation, Inc. (PCTV) with the support of UNICEF among others. The Toolkit, including a video cassette with examples and illustrations of the content of the booklets, serves as a manual to help keeping the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in mind while producing media content for and with children.

For more information, please contact:
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Media Violence

A Thousand Girls on Movies and Violence

by
CECILIA VON FEILITZEN
Scientific Co-ordinator
The Clearinghouse

An anthology with the above title, edited by *Karin Stigbrand* and *Sofie Stolpe*, was published in 2000 by the Council on Media Violence, Sweden. The booklet, consisting of eight articles by Swedish and Danish researchers, is primarily intended for young readers, e.g., in a classroom context as a basis for discussion and project assignment.[1]

Three articles focus on the construction of gender in television, advertising and film, illustrating the symbolic oppression of women. In films, for example, women are often portrayed as victims of sexualised violence (Louise Wallenberg). In advertising, womanhood is portrayed as a life-long bodily career of beauty rituals. The woman is depicted as more or less powerless. She cannot (nor should she) change the environment or other people. What she can and should change is herself, that is, above all her looks (Anja Hirdman).

Gender Aspects of Film Production

One article (by Sofie Stolpe) deals with the film market in Sweden. Women directed 4 of 26 Swedish cinema films during 1998, a pattern largely corresponding to that of previous years. Women are few also among producers, scripts/dramaturgists, photographers, and animators. Instead women are relatively well, or well, represented among stage and costume designers, and among different kinds of assistants.

When taking imported films into account (of which 104 were North American in 1998), women directed 14 of all 185 films that opened this year at Swedish cinemas. Men make films of all genres; films made by women are mostly limited to drama, documentary, children's films, and comedy. North America dominates the categories of horror, action, thriller, comedy and children's films. Europe and Sweden stand out only in terms of drama and documentary. Not more than 13 films came from other parts of the world.

Violent action films are generally distributed to many cinemas all over the country. In contrast, documentaries often open at only one cinema and never more than five, which is why they can be seen only in larger cities. The same is true of movies made by women – they are predominantly shown at 1-5 cinemas.

As regards the home video market, 814 new (imported and domestically produced) films were released during 1998, of which 8 per cent had female directors. Of these *premières*, children/youth films, drama and comedy made up more than half of all home video films. Children/youth films dominated the market of *purchased* videos. However, action, horror, science fiction, thrillers and adventure combined represented two-thirds of the total *rental* market (pornography excluded).

Girls' Opinions on the Depiction of Women and Violence

Four articles present findings of qualitative and quantitative studies on girls' opinions and experience in this context. Since questions in the quantitative study build on findings of the qualitative ones, a few results mainly from the quantitative study (by Karin Stigbrand and Sofie Stolpe) are presented here. This study was conducted via telephone interviews with about one thousand, 16- to 20-year-old girls in Sweden.[2]

The film genres that most girls in this age range prefer are 'comedy' (82%), 'drama' (69%) and 'thriller' (69%). About half prefer 'action' and 'horror', whereas less prefer 'classics'. Interest in drama increases with age, whereas interest in horror movies declines. Among the 16-year-old girls, two-thirds said they enjoyed watching horror movies.

About half of the girls believe that the way in which men and women are portrayed in films is 'rather important' for how men and women perceive themselves in reality, and another few per cent believe it is 'very important'.

Only 3 per cent of the girls answer that violence depicted in films is not significant for how young people perceive violence in real life. Instead, 62 per cent are of the opinion that film violence is significant for 'rather many' or 'most' young people's perception of real violence, and another 35 per cent find it significant 'for a few'. Girls who have personally experienced violence are more likely to believe that film violence is important for how young people perceive violence in real life.

The girls point to consequences of film violence such as imitation, attitude change, wrong perceptions of violence in real life, and too strong fear.

The girls also find a difference in how young women and young men view and talk about film violence – women, as opposed to men, do not accept the connection between violence and sex.

Slightly more than half of the girls have an exaggerated notion of how many women died in 1998 in Sweden as a result of murder or physical

Notes
1. Excerpts of the anthology are available in English on the web site: www.sou.gov.se/valds-skildring
2. The sample consists of girls with identifiable phone numbers (of whom non-response was 16 per cent) from an independent random sample from the census register. The data, collected in October 1999, were post-weighted according to region and age.

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abuse. However, no clear correlation with other variables, e.g., film habits, was detected in the study.

During the past few years, over a third of the girls have seen film scenes so horrifying they wish they had not seen them. More girls with personal experience of real-life violence say they were so horrified.

Most girls (87%) believe that there would be less violence in films if women had more influence in the film industry. The girls believe that movies would instead focus more on relationships and love (86%), everyday drama (79%) and more realistic role figures (78%). Slightly more than half believe that there would be more female leading roles. □

Rape in TV Series Is Mostly about Men

by
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Between 1976 and 1990, depictions of rape scenes in American TV series became more realistic, but men were always the focus of these depictions, while women had more peripheral roles. This is revealed in a new book by US researcher *Lisa M. Cuklanz*.

The book – *Rape on Prime Time. Television, Masculinity and Sexual Violence* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000) – is based on a study of over 100 episodes from different US-produced TV series. Each episode deals with the subject of rape. Several of the TV series are detective shows, among them *Baretta, Hill Street Blues* and *Miami Vice*.

Changes during the Period

The study shows that these TV programs about rape changed dramatically during the period 1976 - 1990. In the beginning of the period, rapists were, almost without exception, portrayed as evil, often masked, mentally deranged persons who assaulted their victims at desolate locations. At the end of the period, rape was more often perpetrated by program characters who knew the victim, and the rape scenes were more often set in a home environment, which is generally more realistic.

In the beginning of the studied period, rape was rarely depicted explicitly. The actual rape was often represented by a hand over the woman's mouth or a woman's cry, filled with agony, out of picture. At the end of the period, rape scenes were depicted using more close-up shots.

At the same time, doubt and ambiguity in the dialogue and in the interaction between the role characters increased, which is more realistic but also leaves the audience wondering whether the woman had consented to the sexual acts. This is in contrast to earlier programs where the rapist's terror and violence against the victim often was repeated; such scenes could only be interpreted as depicting the man as a perverted monster who was obviously guilty of rape.

Consequently, the rape victim's role in the programs has also changed. In the beginning of the period, the victims were quiet, passive and helpless. Many of them refused to co-operate, by testifying, in apprehending the rapist. In the middle of the period, rape victims received more prominent roles with more dialogue. Now they were able to express feelings and needs, but it was also common for victims to take the blame for the rape. At the end of the period, more victims expressed anger and a desire for justice.

Men Constantly in Focus

Despite these changes, men and their actions were in focus in the programs throughout the period. Police officers and other male professionals were always the main characters, while the women and the crimes committed against them were in the background. Between 1976 and 1990 this changed somewhat, but only in the sense that men became even more omnipotent. At the end of the period, the police officers were not only skilled criminal hunters, but also very competent at dealing with emotions, which is shown by their listening to, trying to understand, and supporting the victims. However, even in 1990, the rape victims – the women – still take a background position in the TV programs. ■

Active Mediation Reduced Aggression-Proneness after a Cartoon

"Television mediation" could mean, e.g., talking to children about television ("active mediation"), setting rules or restrictions regarding television viewing ("restrictive mediation"), and watching television with children ("co-viewing") with the aim of reinforcing or counteracting influences of television. *Amy I. Nathanson* and *Joanne Cantor*, U.S.A., find that previous research on "restrictive mediation" and "co-viewing" has produced somewhat inconsistent findings, whereas "active mediation" seems successful in a variety of domains.

However, "active mediation" must not mean that adults always watch television with their children. The two researchers performed an experiment with 351 second through sixth graders in different U.S. schools. Before viewing a 5 minutes' episode of the cartoon *Woody Woodpecker*, one group of children (of three) were encouraged to think about the consequences of violence from the victim's perspective, i.e., these children's "fictional involvement" with the victim was increased. In the episode, Woody Woodpecker is annoyed, because a well-intentioned man, a "tree medic", has interrupted his nap. Woody spends the episode trying to get rid of the man by committing various violent acts against him. The episode ends when Woody knocks the man unconscious and then happily returns to his nap.

The findings were statistically significant. The boys, even the oldest ones, who watched this unrealistic cartoon without the mediation were more aggression-prone after viewing. However, the boys who received the mediation did not show an increase in aggressive tendencies. Neither the cartoon nor the mediation affected the girls' aggression-proneness.

Some likely explanations, supported by the children's answers, are that children who received the mediation perceived the violence inflicted on the victim to be less justified. Rather than identifying with the more attractively portrayed and humorous perpetrator of violence (conditions that, according to previous research, encourage viewers' aggression), these children viewed the violence differently. And although the actual consequences of violence for the victim were not shown (research indicates that depiction of the negative consequences of televised violence inhibits aggressive responses), these children could imagine such consequences.

The two authors recommend future research to continue to explore the effects of parental mediation on children's reactions to violent programming. Also, the authors underline, different mediations could be suitable for different ages. For example, younger children have difficulty in considering the perspectives of others.

Source

Amy I. Nathanson & Joanne Cantor (2000) "Reducing the Aggression-Promoting Effect of Violent Cartoons by Increasing Children's Fictional Involvement with the Victim: A Study of Active Mediation", *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, Vol. 44:1, p. 125-142.

Less Television, Less Aggression?

The objective of a U.S. field experiment was to assess the effects of general reduction of children's television, video films, and video game use ("restrictive mediation") on aggressive behavior, as well as on children's perceptions of the world as mean and scary. Before the study, the children (mean age 8.9 years) used these media combined about 3 hours and 20 minutes a day on average.

105 third and fourth graders in one public elementary school received an 18-lesson, 6-month classroom curriculum during 1999-2000 with tips and advice on how to reduce the media use in question. At the end of the period, they used the three media on average 2 hours a day.

Compared to 120 children in a socio-demographically and scholastically matched elementary school who did not receive this intervention and used the media as usual, aggression among the "test children" significantly decreased as measured by 'peer ratings of aggression' and 'observed verbal aggression on the playground'. ('Observed physical aggression on the playground' and 'parental reports of aggressive behavior' gave no statistically significant differences although they pointed in the same direction. The same was true of children's self-reported perceptions of the world as mean and scary.)

Source

Thomas N. Robinson, Marta L. Wilde, Lisa C. Navracruz, K. Farish Haydel & Ann Varady (2001) "Effects of Reducing Children's Television and Video Game Use on Aggressive Behavior: A Randomized Controlled Trial", *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, Vol. 155:1, p. 17-23.

Coming Events

15th Nordic Conference on Media and Communication Research

REYKJAVIK, ICELAND, AUGUST 11-13, 2001

"New media, New opportunities, New societies" will be the theme of this conference. Three concurrent plenary sessions will discuss "New generations – New media", "Public opinion research" and "Media history". Besides plenary sessions, there are 20 different working groups. Deadline for papers to be presented in the working groups is the 1st of July 2001.

Contact: Guðbjörg Hildur Kolbeins, Local organizing committee
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Iceland
128 Oddi, v/Sturlugötu
101 Reykjavík, Iceland
E-mail: gk@hi.is
Conference web site: http://www.nordmediakonferens.hi.is/english

Asian seminar on the Impact on Children of the Internet and New Media

BANGKOK, THAILAND, AUGUST 22-24, 2001

For information on the seminar, please contact: The Asian Media Information & Communication Centre (AMIC)
Jurong Point, P.O. Box 360
Singapore 916412
Tel: +65 7927570 Fax: +65 7927129
E-mail: amicline@singnet.com.sg
Web site: http://www.amic.org.sg

International Association of Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) Conference – Media Education Research Section

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY, SEPTEMBER 7-8, 2001

The conference theme this year is "Peace and Communication". The Media Education Research Section presents research papers on this theme as well as on related themes that deal with media pedagogy in the formal and non-formal sectors, with the focus on critical media and computer literacy/education, or media and children/young people in other aspects.

Last date for conference registration is August 1.

Contact: Keval J. Kumar, President of the Media Education Research Section, IAMCR
4 Chintamani Apts, Kale Path, Bhandarkar Road
Pune 411004, India
Tel/Fax: +91 20 565 1018
E-mail: kevalkumar@hotmail.com *or* kjkumar@vsnl.com
Web site: http://www.humfak.auc.dk/iamcr/topconferences.html

Readers: The New Generation

CAPETOWN, SOUTH AFRICA, SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2001

The World Association of Newspapers (WAN) in co-operation with Print Media South Africa invites to the 4th International Newspapers in Education Conference. Participants will examine how newspapers around the world are fighting to capture the attention, interest and loyalty of the young. The event will also explore the ever-changing challenge facing newspapers in the vital effort to help create citizens that will maintain and strengthen democratic societies.

The conference is open to newspaper publishers, editors, marketing managers and Newspaper in Education (NIE) co-ordinators. Educators are most welcome.

Contact: World Association of Newspapers
Fax: +331 47 42 49 48
E-mail: contact_us@wan.asso.fr
Web site: http://www.wan-press.org/ce/nie.conference/index.html

United Nations Special Session on Children

NEW YORK, USA, SEPTEMBER 19-21, 2001

The UN Special Session will bring together government leaders and Heads of State, NGOs, children's advocates and young people themselves to review achievements of the World Declaration and Plan of Action of the 1990 World Summit, and to renew commitments and consider future action for children

A message will be carried from the Special session to the world by the Global Movement for Children. The Global Movement will work to provide a united voice for all those throughout the world working to improve the lives of children.

For further information, see: http://www.unicef.org/specialsession
Also visit CRIN (http://www.crin.org) for more information on NGO activities and issues in connection with the Special Session.

Prix Danube

BRATISLAVA, SLOVAK REPUBLIC, SEPTEMBER 23-29, 2001

The 16th International Television Festival of Programmes for Children and Youth is a competition exhibition of television creation for children and youth organised by the Slovak Television. It creates a platform for learning the creation of other national cultures, for inspiration of creators, for finding new themes and formal processing. The festival also aims to create a backdrop for the fight against violence on the television screen.

This year's festival, which is a biennial event, comes with a new classification of categories which focus on the age division of young viewers.

Contact: Jozef Filo, Festival Director, or Jela Kezmanová, Secretary General
Slovak Television, Mlynská dolina,
845 45 Bratislava, Slovak Republic
Tel: +421 7 6542 5220, Fax: +421 7 6542 8609
E-mail: prixdanube@stv.sk
Web site: http://www.stv.sk/prixdanube

Japan Prize – International Educational Program Contest

TOKYO, JAPAN, NOVEMBER 9-16, 2001

This contest was established in 1965 by the Japanese broadcasting company NHK, with the aims of contributing to the advancement of the world's educational broadcasting and to the promotion of understanding and co-operation among nations. Over the years it has encouraged broadcasters to strive for the production of ever better educational programs.

Deadlines: For application forms and program tapes: August 31, 2001, for observers: October 19, 2001.

For information about the contest and conditions for entry, please contact: Masao Watari, Secretary General
Japan Prize Contest Secretariat
NHK-Japan Broadcasting Corporation
2-2-1 Jinnan, Shibuya-ku
Tokyo, Japan, 150-8001
Tel: +81 3 3465 6199, Fax: +81 3 3481 1800
E-mail: japan-prize@media.nhk.or.jp
http://www.nhk.or.jp/jp-prize/

European Conference 'Young People and the Media: Research, Methods and Prospects'

MARLY-LE-ROI, FRANCE, NOVEMBER 29 – DECEMBER 2, 2001

GRREM (the Research Group on the Relationship between Children and Media), France, is co-ordinating this conference which will take place at the National Institute of Youth and Popular Education (INJEP) with support of the French National Commission for UNESCO, the French Ministry of Youth and Sports, the French Ministry of Labour, INJEP, and the media education organisation CLEMI.

Proposals for papers: deadline July 15. See further details on the website below.

Contact: GRREM
28 place St Georges
75009 Paris, France
E-mail: grrem@club-internet.fr
Web site: http://www.grrem.org

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International Children's Day of Broadcasting

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2001

Every December thousands of children around the globe celebrate the International Children's Day of Broadcasting (ICDB). Children take to the air as reporters, presenters and producers of programmes that express their own dreams and concerns. The key to the yearly event is participation by children and adolescents, and television and radio networks around the world are invited to continue their extraordinary work by taking up a new challenge for 2001.

This year there is a special call to broadcasters to "Change the world with children". The broadcasters will be asked to focus on the major challenges facing children everywhere, namely: *poverty, discrimination, HIV/AIDS* and *conflict*, and on how society is mobilizing to take these obstacles on. As the year progresses, hope is raised that broadcasters will show how they are working with children to overcome some of these major challenges and demonstrate instances in which adults respect and learn from children in a way that is mutually beneficial.

Web site: http://www.unicef.org/icdb/index.html

Second World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

YOKOHAMA, JAPAN, DECEMBER 17-20, 2001

A Second World Congress on commercial and other forms of sexual exploitation of children will be hosted by the Japanese Government in association with the Prefecture of Yokahama, in co-operation with ECPAT International, UNICEF and the NGO Group on the Rights of the Child.

The First World Congress took place in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1996. Three elements of commercial sexual exploitation of children was brought into focus: child prostitution, trafficking and sale of children for sexual purposes, and child pornography, including on the Internet. A Declaration and an Agenda for Action was considered and adopted (available in full on the web site of Swedish Save the Children: http://www.rb.se/engindex.htm).

The main objective of the Second World Congress is to review progress on the implementation by states of the Stockholm Agenda for Action. The congress should also identify the main problem areas in implementation of the Agenda, identify new manifestations of the issue, and share good practices in combating commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Contact: ECPAT International (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes)
328 Phayathai Road
Bangkok 10400, Thailand
Tel: +662 215 3388, Fax: +662 215 8272
E-mail: ecpatbkk@ksc15.th.com
Web site: http://www.ecpat.net
See also http://www.focalpointngo.org/ngonews/yokup1.htm

Childnet International Awards 2002

These annual awards highlight and reward innovative Internet projects made by children, or benefiting children, and encourage those with limited resources to extend their work. A common "thread" running through out is that the activities shall be developed with the aim of improving the educational and social opportunities of young people. More information on the Childnet Awards 2002 will be available on the web site in June 2001.

Contact: Childnet International
Studio 14, Brockley Cross Business Centre
96 Endwell Road
London, SE4 2PD, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 020 7639 6967, Fax: +44 020 7639 7027
E-mail: info@childnet-int.org
Web site: http://www.childnet-int.org/awards/index.html

4th World Summit on Media for Children

The next World Summit on Media for Children will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2004. When available, more information about the Summit will be published on the Clearinghouse web site (http://www.nordicom.gu.se/unesco.html) and in coming issues of *News from ICCVOS*.

International Festivals for Films Made by Children

International Children's Film Festivals where children can participate with their own work are continuously taking place. For more information and contact details, please check the Clearinghouse web site (http://www.nordicom.gu.se/unesco.html) under "Coming Events".

New Address?
Please contact Catharina Bucht
Fax: +46 31 773 46 55, e-mail: catharina.bucht@nordicom.gu.se

The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen

In 1997, the Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research (Nordicom), Göteborg University, Sweden, began establishment of The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen, financed by the Swedish government and UNESCO. The overall point of departure for the Clearinghouse's efforts with respect to children and media violence is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The aim of the Clearinghouse is to increase awareness and knowledge about children and media violence, not least in view of the newer channels of communication such as satellite television and Internet, thereby providing a basis for relevant policy-making and contributing to a constructive public debate. Another goal is to point out initiatives aiming to enhance children's competence as users of the media. Moreover, it is hoped that the Clearinghouse's work will stimulate further research on children and the media.

The International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen informs various groups of users – researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, teachers, voluntary organisations and interested individuals – about

- research on children, young people and media violence,
- children's access to mass media and their media use,
- media literacy and children's participation in the media, and
- regulatory and voluntary measures and activities in the area.

Fundamental to the work of the Clearinghouse is the creation of a global *network*. The Clearinghouse publishes a *yearbook* and a *newsletter*. Several *bibliographies* and a world-wide *register of organisations* concerned with children and media have been compiled. This and other information is available on the Clearinghouse's *web site*: www.nordicom.gu.se/unesco.html

The Clearinghouse is located at Nordicom

NORDICOM is an organ of co-operation between the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The overriding goal and purpose is to make the media and communication efforts undertaken in the Nordic countries known, both throughout and far beyond our part of the world.

NORDICOM is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

NORDICOM uses a variety of channels – newsletters, journals, books, databases – to reach researchers, students, decision-makers, media practitioners, journalists, teachers and interested members of the general public.

NORDICOM works to establish and strengthen links between the Nordic research community and colleagues in all parts of the world, both by means of unilateral flows and by linking individual researchers, research groups and institutions.

NORDICOM also documents media trends in the Nordic countries. The joint Nordic information addresses users in Europe and further afield. The production of comparative media statistics forms the core of this service.

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The UNESCO
International Clearinghouse
on Children and Violence on the Screen

Göteborg University

Nordic Council of Ministers

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